

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

1.) Claim Amendments

Applicant has amended Claim 1. Claims 3 and 5 have been presently cancelled; Claims 1-2, 4, 8-11, and 13-20 are pending in the application. Favorable reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

2.) Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a)

Examiner rejected claims 1, 3, 4, 9, 13 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sebestyen (US 5,999,985) in view of Strauss, et al. (US 5,790,173). In order to expedite allowance of this application, Applicant has amended independent claim 1 to incorporate the elements of claim 5 (indicated by Examiner as allowable) and intervening claim 3. In light of the amendments, Applicant respectfully submits that amended claim 1 and all claims dependent therefrom are patentable. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

Examiner rejected claims 10 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sebestyen in view of Strauss as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Elliott (US 2002/0064149). Elliott is not cited as disclosing, teaching, or even suggesting any of the elements of amended independent claim 1. Thus, claims 10 and 11 are patentable over Sebestyen, Strauss, and Elliott, taken alone or in any permissible combination, at least due to their dependency on amended independent claim 1. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

Examiner rejected claim 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sebestyen in view of Strauss as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Cave, et al. (US 2001/005382). Cave is not cited as disclosing, teaching, or even suggesting any of the elements of amended independent claim 1. Thus, claim 2 is patentable over Sebestyen, Strauss, and Cave, taken alone or in any permissible combination, at least due to its dependency on amended independent claim 1. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

3.) Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the allowance of claims 15-20.

Applicant notes with appreciation the conditional allowance of claims 5 and 8. As indicated above, Applicant has amended independent claim 1 with the elements of claim 5 and any intervening claims.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, the Applicant believes all of the claims currently pending in the Application to be in a condition for allowance. The Applicant, therefore, respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw all rejections and issue a Notice of Allowance for all pending claims.

The Applicant requests a telephonic interview if the Examiner has any questions or requires any additional information that would further or expedite the prosecution of the Application.

Respectfully submitted,

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